AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 25 and amend claims 11–24 and 26 as follows.

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1.–10. (Canceled).

11. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~configuring a firewall (1) in a computer system (2) comprising objects (3), and resources (4), for establishing an access control policy for the objects (3), the method~~ controlling access to network resources, comprising:

~~grouping the objects (3) of the system into internal and external protection domains (5, 6),~~

~~ensuring establishing a firewall (a) for protection of an internal domain (5) relative to an external domain (6), and~~

~~applying to the firewall a rule for controlling access between a source resource (4) and a destination resource only if said source and destination resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain (5 or 6)~~

at a central configuration machine:

defining an internal protection domain for each of a plurality of firewalls, each internal protection domain including at least one zone, each zone having at least one access-controlled network resource;

defining at least one external protection domain for the plurality of firewalls, the external protection domain including at least one zone having at least one access-controlled network resource;

creating a plurality of resource groups, each resource group including at least one zone;

specifying an access control rule, including a scope, for each resource group;

configuring each firewall using the access control rules; and *at each firewall:*

in response to a request to access a destination network resource received from a source network resource, determining whether to apply the access control rule specified for the resource group associated with the destination network resource based on the scope of the access control rule.

12. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising:

determining the protection domain of the access-controlled network resources ~~(4) by means of~~ using firewall network interfaces ~~(10)~~ through which communications pass ~~in order~~ to reach said access-controlled network resources.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, further comprising:

~~defining zones (8) comprising networks or subnetworks,~~

associating ~~the~~ each firewall network interfaces ~~(10) of firewalls to which said zones are connected~~ with an internal or external protection domain,

determining ~~the~~ incoming and outgoing firewall network interfaces ~~(10)~~ of current traffic,

analyzing whether ~~said~~ the incoming and outgoing firewall network interfaces are attached to an internal or external protection domain, and

applying the rule for controlling access only if ~~both~~ the incoming and outgoing firewall network interfaces are attached to the same internal protection domain ~~(5),~~ and the access-controlled network resources belong to the same protection domain.

14. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, ~~characterized in that it composes groups of objects (3) for which the access control policy is identical and~~ wherein the rule for controlling access is applied between each of the access-controlled network resources of a source resource group and a destination resource group.

15. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, ~~characterized in that it composes groups of objects (3) for which the access control policy is identical and~~ wherein the rule for controlling access is applied between each of the access-controlled network resources of a source resource group and a destination resource group.

16. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13, ~~characterized in that it composes groups of objects (3) for which the access control policy is identical and~~ wherein

the rule for controlling access is applied between each of the access-controlled network resources of a source resource group and a destination resource group.

17. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 11, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 12, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

19. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 13, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

20. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 14, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

21. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 15, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

22. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 16, further comprising:

~~characterizing~~ specifying the scope of each rule for controlling access ~~with~~ as local or global ~~scope~~,

when the scope of the rule is local, applying the rule to the access-controlled network resources in question only if said access-controlled network resources belong to the same internal or external protection domain ~~(5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local~~, and

when the scope of the rule is global, applying the rule to all of the access-controlled network resources in question ~~when the scope of the rule is global~~.

23. (Currently Amended) ~~A device for configuring a firewall (1) in a computer system (2)~~ A system for controlling access to network resources, comprising:

~~resources (4) including objects (3) having an access control policy and an established central configuration machine (14) for grouping the objects (3) of the system into internal (5) and external (6) protection domains,~~

~~a firewall (1) ensuring the protection of an internal domain (5) relative to an external domain (6), and~~

~~means for applying to the firewall in question a rule for controlling access between a source resource (4) and a destination resource only if said source and destination resources belong to the same protection domain (5) or (6)~~

an external network including at least one external subnetwork having at least one network resource;

a plurality of firewalls, coupled to the external network, each firewall including at least one internal subnetwork, each internal subnetwork having at least one access-controlled network resource; and

a central configuration machine, coupled to the external network, adaptively configured to:

define an internal protection domain for each of the plurality of firewalls, each internal protection domain including a zone corresponding to each internal subnetwork,

define an external protection domain for the plurality of firewalls, the external protection domain including a zone corresponding to each external subnetwork,

create a plurality of resource groups, each resource group including at least one zone,

specify an access control rule, including a scope, for each resource group, and

configure each firewall using the access control rules.

24. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 23, ~~characterized in that it further comprises~~ wherein the central configuration machine includes a graphical interface ~~(15)~~ from which an administrator ~~(7)~~ can enter the protection domains ~~(5)~~ and ~~(6)~~ and the access control rules.

25. (Canceled).

26. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 24, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the graphical interface allows the administrator ~~(7)~~ to define a local or global scope

for the access control rule~~, and in that the machine (14) applies the rule to the resources in question only if said resources belong to the same protection domain (5) or (6) when the scope of the rule is local, and applies the rule to all of the resources in question when the scope of the rule is global~~.